

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Please enter the enclosed Replacement Sheets for Figures 11-13, which designate the same as “Related Art” per the examiner’s request.

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response to the non-final Office Action dated December 23, 2004 (Paper No. 12092004). The present Amendment amends allowable claims 3, 11 and 19 to be in independent form and amends claims 7, 8, 15 and 23 to correct minor matters of form and syntax. Claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 17 and 18 have been cancelled in favor of potentially pursuing allowance of the same in a continuing application. Support for these amendments can be found variously throughout the specification, including, for example, original claims 1, 9 and 17. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 3-8, 11-16 and 19-24 are presently pending in the application, each of which is believed to be in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the present Amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claim to Priority

Acknowledgement of the proper receipt of the certified formal papers filed in connection with Applicant's claim to priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) is noted with appreciation.

Drawings:

According to the examiner's instructions, Replacement Sheets for Figure 11-13 have been attached to this Amendment in order to designate the same as "Related Art". Accordingly, entry of these Replacement Sheets and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is courteously solicited.

Specification & Abstract

The specification has been reviewed to correct minor matters of form and syntax in the specification as filed. Marked-up and clean versions of a substitute specification incorporating these changes in accordance with 37 CFR § 1.125(c) are attached to this Amendment. Entry of these changes, involving minor matters not involving new matter, is respectfully solicited.

Allowable Subject Matter:

The Applicant thanks the examiner for recognizing claims 3-6, 8, 11-14, 16, 19-22 and 24 as containing allowable subject matter. In accordance with the examiner's suggestion, claims

3, 11 and 19 have been amended so as to be set forth in independent form. Withdrawal of the objection to these claims and allowance of the same are therefore respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections- 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Action, claims 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 15, 17, 18 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,587,508 to Hanamura et al. (“Hanamura”). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. However, in order to expedite prosecution, and without conceding the merits of the applied rejection, claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 17 and 18 have been cancelled. Applicant reserves the right to file continuing applications directed to the subject matter of the presently-cancelled claims. Withdrawal of this rejection is therefore courteously solicited.

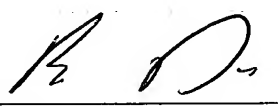
Conclusion

For at least the foregoing reasons, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If the examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-0013, under Order No. SON-2319, from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: March 23, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Replacement Sheets for Figs. 11-13
Substitute Specification (marked-up and clean versions)

DC182985.DOC